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THE CHURCHES IN ACTION

NEWS LETTER

OF THE

UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL FOR LIFE AND WORK

AND THE

WORLD ALLIANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES

Published quarterly in English, French and German.

The above-mentioned organisations are not officially responsible for the opinions expressed in this News Letter
Reprint invited. Acknowledgement will be appreciated.

Price : 2 Swiss francs a year. Post Cheque No. I. 572. Geneva. H.-L. Henriod, *General Secretary*

No. 17 41, Avenue de Champel, Geneva June 1938

LIFE AND WORK

THE UTRECHT CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES

In the summer of 1937 the World Conferences on Life and Work, held at Oxford, and on Faith and Order, held at Edinburgh, reached a decision in principle to unite the two movements, which had hitherto worked separately, and entrusted a jointly appointed Committee of Fourteen with the drafting of a constitution for a " World Council of Churches ". This Committee did not wish to carry out its task without calling upon representatives of the churches for their counsel and participation in the responsibility involved, and for that reason it summoned a consultative conference of sixty members, from all churches except the Church of Rome, to meet at Utrecht from May 9 to 13 last.

The Utrecht meeting had the character of a study conference. Its only public appearance was on the occasion of the oecumenical service which took place in the Cathedral of Utrecht, with a very large attendance, and which was broadcast. Following the service, a reception for the members of the conference was held in the Aula of the University, by representatives of the parishes and the city of Utrecht, and of the churches of Holland.

The conference met for its discussions under the clear and helpful chairmanship of the Archbishop of York. Archbishop Germanos, Metropolitan of Thyateira, who represents the Oecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, and Metropolitan Eulogios, of the Russian Emigrant Church of Paris, were present, among others, on behalf of the Orthodox Church. Great Britain, America and the Continent of Europe were represented by leading personalities from their various churches. China and India also sent delegates.

After preliminary, fundamental discussion, a draft constitution was submitted to the conference, which it discussed in two readings and unanimously adopted. The constitution provides for a comprehensive body of all the Christian churches, which is to be known as the " World Council of Churches ". The principal organs of this World Council are the Assembly, numbering four hundred and fifty members, which is to meet every five years and, as its committee, a Central Council of ninety members. Membership of both bodies is distributed among the churches of the different continents, who will themselves be responsible for deciding how such distribution is to be made. Special consideration will be given to minority churches. The organs of the World Council of Churches will have no legislative powers. The freedom and independence of every church is unconditionally guaranteed. But it should be possible for the World Council to undertake common action, where common interest demands it, in the name and at the special request of definite churches.

The functions of the World Council will be principally connected with the carrying on of the

work of the two oecumenical organisations : for Faith and Order and for Life and Work. It should also serve the purpose of facilitating joint procedure on the part of the churches and of promoting oecumenical study work. In its whole activity, it will be concerned with a steady intensification and strengthening of oecumenical consciousness among the members of all churches, an obligation which should find expression in oecumenical educational work of a many-sided kind, and in mutual inter-church aid. The Council will also have the task of summoning from time to time world conferences for the discussion of special questions.

In the fulfilment of these functions, the World Council will work in close relationship to other oecumenical organisations, to the world confessional associations, the international Christian youth movements and the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches. Intimate collaboration is also anticipated with the European Central Office for Inter-Church Aid. Of special significance, moreover, are the possibilities of establishing close organic connections with the International Missionary Council, which includes in its membership all the younger churches. Such contact would be sought not only on behalf of the churches of Asia and Africa, which are eager for closer relationship with the churches of old Christendom, but for the sake of the older churches themselves, whose great common task it is to carry out evangelistic missionary work all over the world.

Of great importance is the principle laid down that the World Council of Churches is a fellowship of all those churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. Dogmatic allegiance to the Godhead of Christ, which was already a basic principle for the Faith and Order movement, has thus been established for the new organisation. Without this principle the overwhelming majority of the churches would have refused their consent.

Reservations made by the Edinburgh World Conference in August 1937, while agreeing in principle to the creation of a World Council, make it necessary that in September 1938 the new draft constitution shall be submitted to the Continuation Committee of the Faith and Order movement, before ratification by the churches. Moreover, before the constitution can finally come into force, a number of years must elapse, since many church bodies hold only every three or five years assemblies at which important decisions of this kind can be confirmed. For this reason the first meeting of the World Council can hardly be expected to take place before 1942. In the meanwhile a provisional committee of thirty-four people is to take the necessary steps for the development of the new plan. The present General Secretary of the World's Student Christian Federation, Dr. W. A. Visser't Hooft, of Holland, has already been appointed General Secretary of the World Council (to take office from December, 1938) and, subject to the agreement of the World Conference of Missions to be held in Madras in December, it has also been decided that the Rev. W. Paton, hitherto exclusively Secretary of the International Missionary Council, shall, as a further General Secretary, place part of his time at the disposal of the World Council of Churches.

It is a matter for immense thankfulness that the developments of the last twenty years have made it possible to visualise a step which will draw the individual churches much more directly than hitherto into responsibility for the growing, world-wide solidarity that exists among them. In the future as in the past, care will be taken that organic growth, and not hasty organisational measures with no full reality behind them, shall form the basis of development.

RESULTS OF THE UTRECHT CONFERENCE FOR THE STOCKHOLM MOVEMENT

The representatives of the Christian churches met at Stockholm in 1925 with the desire for Christian unity and common action in the domain of practical Christianity. They adopted a message to Christendom which constituted a true charta of the social and moral tasks of the oecumenical movement. The same churches, represented at Lausanne two years later, proclaimed a new message expressing their hope for unity on the foundations of doctrine and of faith. The Stockholm message represented no pious vow or decorative panoply, but formed indeed a banner which the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work and its executive organs, — its secretariat, its commissions, its Research Department, — were charged to carry into the fight for the cause of Christ. The Research Department devoted all its care to a variety of research enquiries, on such subjects as unemployment, international labour legislation, the campaign against opium, and others as well. Since 1930, its study conferences have multiplied, the subjects for discussion concentrating more and more on the Church and the questions of principle which determine the duties of the Church wherever it is called to bear its witness. The recent conference of Oxford marked a focusing stage in these studies carried out in the different countries and coordinated by the Research Department ; and it formed also the starting point for more extensive and more precise studies which would guide the Christian church in the face of a world that is distraught, bruised, divided, and deaf to the warnings of the living God.

Oxford, like Stockholm, has passed on to the Universal Christian Council more than a study function. It has given it concrete and pressing tasks to accomplish, practical conclusions to draw from the principles accepted : solidarity of action in assisting churches in need, in succouring the persecuted, in stretching out a hand to refugees, in fulfilling an indispensable duty of information and education which will reach the rank and file of Christians, in making a direct, clear and living appeal to the younger generation, canvassed, as it is, by human ideologies or enlisted in the cause of an aggressive secularism.

The Utrecht Conference confirmed and gave precision to the churches' will for collaboration ; it gave definite shape to the wishes expressed by the Oxford and Edinburgh conferences, in a constitution, unanimously adopted, which will enable two complementary movements to unite in one organism for which the churches themselves will be responsible.

This new organism does not yet cover all the oecumenical efforts, but it provides for closer and more profitable collaboration with the International Missionary Council, with the principal Christian youth organisations, with the world confessional organisations and with the European Central Office for Inter-Church Aid. On the other hand, the new orientation and organisation which the Stockholm Movement has been called upon to adopt will modify, whether nationally, in a good number of countries, or on an international scale, the activity which it has carried out jointly with the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches over the six years preceding the Oxford Conference.

A new orientation, however, does not imply any radical change of front, but a noticeable modification on three points in particular :

1) The new organism will have a more official character which will give it more authority among the churches, but which will also oblige it to act with more caution and less suppleness and spontaneity.

2) It was no part of the proceedings at Stockholm to impose a creed and dogmatic conditions upon the churches seeking to unite on a programme of life and work. And the same was true of Oxford. The new World Council of Churches will itself be composed of churches which, — as was the case at the Lausanne and Edinburgh conferences, — declare their faith in Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.

3) The expression « Life and Work » has not been retained in the title of the new Council, but the functions provided for in the constitution proposed to the churches none the less envisage the continuation of the activities of the two movements which it will embrace. The Provisional Committee responsible for the transitional period has already ensured the continuation of the study work and has called upon a particularly qualified staff to carry it through. The wish has been clearly expressed that other practical and immediate tasks shall be pursued. The maintenance and extension of the services which the new World Council of Churches will be able to render in relation to the concrete tasks hitherto imposed upon the Stockholm Movement and in relation to the study work depend on the moral and material support of the churches and on indispensable financial resources.

H. L. H.

PROPOSALS FOR THE OECUMENICAL STUDY WORK

In connection with the exploitation of the results of the Oxford Conference, the Research Department of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work has been entrusted with the task of preparing suggestions for the further shaping of the oecumenical study work. To this end, personal contacts have been established in the last few months with leading representatives of the churches and experts from all spheres and professions, in Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Latvia, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland. These personal contacts have been supplemented by a number of written expressions of opinion submitted by oecumenical representatives, committees of churches or collaborators in the oecumenical research groups. Special mention must here be made of the comments received from North America and from the Orthodox Churches, which have been still further amplified through personal discussions on the occasion of the Utrecht Conference. The concrete proposals which have emerged from this exchange of views have revealed very general agreement and are to be taken into consideration, after corresponding discussion with the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Conference, which is to meet at Clarens in early September, in drafting the study programme of the proposed World Council of Churches.

In all the discussions and comments, the necessity has constantly been stressed of preserving the link, in future oecumenical study work, with that of the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences ; and it has been urged with all emphasis that a unified direction and coordination of the oecumenical study work of the Lausanne and Stockholm movements should be brought about. This demand was based upon the fact that the great dogmatic and ethical tasks now facing churches and Christians in all countries and the oecumenical movement as such,

belong inseparably together, and that only through coordination of this kind can the work be mastered. In addition, the world-embracing problems which the churches have to keep before them require more than ever the resolute common devotion of all Christian forces. In the different churches, study plans have already been elaborated and embarked upon in a manner that gives practical expression to such coordination.

Further material confirmation of these proposals is afforded by the fact that the demand has constantly been put forward in all discussions and written comments that the question of the Church itself, and of its relationship to the world, shall be given a central place in all forthcoming oecumenical study work, and the special tasks related to it where necessary [1].

Oecumenical thinking on the subject of the Church should not, however, be restricted to dogmatic, ethical and constitutional questions, but must look at the Church more earnestly and conscientiously as an organic, living community and pay more attention as well to its sacramental and liturgical life and to its life of prayer.

Suggestions have been forthcoming from all sides, in Europe, in America and in the Far East, to the effect that the whole study work should have much stronger biblical foundation. Here it is a question, in the light of biblical revelation, of working out the specific Christian contribution in the present spiritual debate, and of thus securing immediately effective guidance for the practical life and action of the Christian, the individual churches and the Una Sancta. In this connection the clarification of the question of the common decisive authority in the Church, of the ultimate criteria of Christian thought and action, and of the whole group of questions concerning bible, confession and tradition, was indicated everywhere as specially urgent.

The keenest possible interest is felt for these questions in the Orthodox churches ; and the next Pan-Orthodox Congress of Theologians, which is to be held in 1939, will give special attention to the theme of " Holy Scripture and Tradition " in all its various aspects.

In addition to a number of individual collaborators who are engaged upon working out an attitude to the results of Oxford, turning on the Holy Scripture and on the whole realism of biblical thought, a central study group of jurists, sociologists and theologians are already at work in Holland, on a critical examination, from this same angle, of the reports of the five sections of the Oxford Conference and are seeking, by a following up of the findings of Oxford, to define the genuine Christian attitude to certain problems of the international order.

Unanimous emphasis has been given, in the reactions and comments, to the need for intensifying and extending the oecumenical debate on the great burning social problems which began in connection with Oxford, leaving it obviously to each church to collaborate and make its contribution in its own special way. In this connection two groups of questions, which have not so far been handled in detail in the oecumenical discussion, have come repeatedly into the foreground, one the question of the family in its obviously decisive importance as a community-building cell in the Church and in the whole of society, and the other the problem of the law in its threefold significance for an understanding of the Church and politics, the Church and international order, and the faith and constitution of the Church.

In North America, in a number of churches, and to some extent in collaboration between *different* churches, study meetings have been held in which the five sectional reports have been talked over, in order to discover the decisive starting point for the coming study work and to prepare for a thorough, fundamental expression of opinion by the churches on the findings of Oxford. Plans are also in hand for studying how far the principles which have been repeatedly affirmed and proclaimed in the last ten years, in the light of the social task of the Church, have actually been applied in the reality of church, social and political life, and how far and for what reasons this has not been so.

Far-reaching possibilities for such a discussion on the great social problems will emerge, in particular in Great Britain, if effect is really given to the study plans which are at present being proposed in connection with the formation of a Council of Churches in Great Britain, and which have already been considered by the official bodies of the churches and to some extent approved. In addition to the questions and tasks which concern the subject of Church and economics, studies are also visualised on the responsibility which faces the churches today in the community life of their nations and in the sphere of education and of international life [1].

On the basis of a study discussion in connection with the Utrecht Conference, the Research Department will also devote itself to the task of establishing, through personal contacts and investigations, what particular tasks have been under-

1. See the statement of the General Secretary of the Continuation Committee of the Edinburgh Conference, in *The Churches in Action*, No. 16, p. 8, to the effect that in all probability the next task to be undertaken is the study of the doctrine of the Church.

1. See the more detailed proposals in the study programme submitted by the churches in Great Britain under the title « The Christian Faith and the Common Life », obtainable from Edinburgh House, 2. Eaton Gate, London, S.W. 1. 24 pages, 3d.

taken in the different churches as a consequence of the Oxford Conference, or seem to be particularly important. Moreover, the introduction of an oecumenical exchange of thought on the peculiar nature of the Christian ethos is regarded as specially urgent. Its results would be of value to all other special studies which are planned, or are already being carried out, in the various churches, on the theme of the Church and the world, in its various forms. And it is just on account of the dangerous falsification and widespread rejection of the authority of the Christian ethos that it is urgently necessary to define its special character in a clear and unambiguous manner and to establish at what essential points it is distinguished from the prevailing moral ideologies of modern society.

The Research Department will furthermore support the work planned in the various churches on the central question of the meaning and justification of the oecumenical movement, by issuing as soon as possible a systematic summary of the principal literature (including periodicals) and of the essential points of view which have emerged in the fundamental treatment of this question.

Whatever shape the future study work of the proposed World Council of Churches may take, one thing has repeatedly been emphasised in all contributions to the discussion : that on the one hand an oecumenical general policy should be worked out which will be of service in assembling and exploiting the Christian forces ; and on the other, that room should be provided for a study programme of greater scope and elasticity in which the churches can make special contributions on the basis of their concrete and highly varied situations. It will then be the task of the World Council to make suitable provision for a " clearing " of these individual church studies and of their methods and findings, and so to make them of use for the whole oecumenical discussion.

On all sides too, it is regarded as decisively important that the oecumenical study work should be linked up as closely as possible with the other main functions of the World Council, and so contribute to their real fulfilment. In accomplishing its task of paving the way for common procedure on the part of the churches, such study work would at the same time be of immediate service to the churches in their responsibility for mutual assistance on an oecumenical scale ; and it would create suitable material for the urgently needed deepening and extension of oecumenical consciousness among the members of all churches, especially as this study work itself represents a piece of most practical " oecumenical education ". But, first and foremost, such study work must be determined, as must the whole activity of the World Council of Churches, by a truly missionary purpose, with its devotion based on a realisation of the call of God Himself.

WORLD ALLIANCE

PREPARATIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL

When a ship, making for a distant but known destination, encounters rough seas, when a storm rages or fogs close in, it is necessary to slow down, to take in sail and sometimes even to alter course. But the responsibility of the crew is all the greater : its vigilance must never be relaxed.

So it is with the Alliance, at a time when clouds are gathering in the political sky, and contrary winds endanger navigation, breaking the masts and helms of other craft, paralysing the progress of the ship of the League of Nations, which has lost part of its crew and seems to have come to a standstill.

It has been possible to hold only one of the Alliance's regional conferences : a limited conference, without publicity, has taken place on the western frontier of Switzerland, where representatives of the churches of three great countries and of Switzerland discussed over three days the conditions in which efforts are being made for international brotherhood, by those who have one pilot, Jesus Christ. It was a friendly conference, in which great frankness and complete confidence prevailed, and at which agreement was quickly reached as to the methods to be employed in these anxious times in the achievement of a common aim. A public church service ended the meeting.

The General Secretary and two of the international secretaries, Professor Siegmund-Schultze and Professor Zankow, together with the Youth Secretary, Mr. Espy, have been actively at work in these last months visiting a number of national councils in central Europe and in the Balkan, Scandinavian and Baltic countries. On the other hand, the evangelisation campaign planned for Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Austria, the other regional conferences of the Alliance and of the Youth Commission, have had to be postponed for some months.

At the Utrecht Conference, to which official representatives of most of the Christian churches were invited, a good many of whom were officials or active collaborators of the Alliance, an oppor-

tunity was provided, in informal discussion, for an exchange of views on the future relations of the new Council with the Alliance.

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The Executive Committee of the Alliance met in London from May 16 to 18. It learnt with interest of the results of the Utrecht Conference (where Professor Siegmund-Schultze officially represented the Alliance) and of the proposal of the Provisional Committee to divide the time of Monsieur Henriod between the two movements for the next few years. The Executive Committee decided that it would be preferable to propose to the International Council of the Alliance that it should invite Monsieur Henriod to give all his time as General Secretary of the Alliance, and to ensure through him, if the Provisional Committee should wish it, the liaison between the Alliance and the official bodies of the new Council of Churches.

The work of the Executive Committee bore in particular on the programme of the International Council to be held at Larvik, Norway, from August 23 to 29 next, and on that of the Conference on the problems of religious minorities which is to precede it.

In the course of the limited conference to be held by the Minorities Commission on August 19 and 20, Professor Siegmund-Schultze will deal with the question of " The Constitution of a Minority Church ", which is a vital one for a number of religious communities and one which affects the relations between the State and the minority churches. Reports will be presented on religious minorities in Poland and in Soviet Russia. A discussion on the problem of refugees will be introduced by the High Commissioner of the Nansen office, Mr. Hansson. The conclusions of this conference will be presented to the International Council of the Alliance which, in its turn, will receive a report from Mr. Hansson on refugees and stateless persons, after two sessions have been devoted to reports on the actual conditions in the various countries and on the tasks thereby imposed upon the Alliance.

Two days will be taken up, one of them under the presidency of the Bishop of Novi Sad, with the subjects of : " The National and Supranational Character of the Church of Christ ", with addresses by the Bishop of Oslo, Professeur D. M. Baillie, of Scotland, and Dr. Baak, of Holland ; and " The Christian Meaning of Peace ", probably introduced by Pastor Georges Lauga, of Paris, and a speaker from Finland or Scandinavia. A third day will be devoted to a general discussion on " Ways which lead to Peace " and on the part which the Alliance is called upon to play in opening up that way. These are questions of principle and of practical action closely related to the preoccupations of the day. A few sessions will be given to matters concerning the interior order of the Alliance and to that of the staff required for the carrying out of its task. At the conclusion of the discussion, the delegates will go to Oslo, where a solemn service will be held in the Cathedral on Tuesday, evening, August 30, preceded in the afternoon by a reception at Oslo University.

Delegation coming from America, Great Britain, most of the countries of Europe, together with a few representatives from the Far East and from Australasia, will meet once more on this occasion to declare the will of the Christian church to work for the cause of peace, confessing together their faith and their desire to serve wherever God has placed them, in an effort of real Christian solidarity.

CARE FOR REFUGEES

For some weeks the stream of Austrian refugees has been pouring into Central and Western Europe. In the first days after the upheaval in Austria, refugees crossed the frontier for the most part into Czechoslovakia and Hungary, but subsequently migration took place directly into Switzerland. From March 13 onwards, the departure of those holding only Austrian passports was prevented by the Austrian-German authorities. But none the less by March 20 over three thousand Austrian refugees were to be found in Zürich in the hotels and pensions alone. As a result of this influx, Switzerland in turn closed its frontiers and made every effort to get rid of the refugees as quickly as possible. But France, too, took counter-measures, and from a given moment no longer allowed refugees to pass through the country on their way to England unless they could produce official permits from the British Government authorising them to enter the country. Immense perplexity thus arose not only for the refugees themselves, but in particular for all church and other offices which are concerned with care for the refugees. The initiative of the President of the United States of America in regard to the reception of Austrian refugees certainly aroused hopes, but provided no practical solution for the moment. The conference planned for July 6, to which twenty-six states have accepted the invitation of the American President, will have to work out new methods of relief ; but these again will presumably only come into force after the decisions of this year's Assembly of the League of Nations regarding the continuation of the League's refugee organisations.

In these circumstances it was important that the International Christian Committee for German

Refugees was able to meet in London in the middle of May. This Committee, it goes without saying, felt as responsible for the Austrian refugees, who are now in fact also German refugees, as for those who had previously left Germany. And it was stated that the individual national and local organisations for church relief work on behalf of refugees had expressed similar views. A decision was adopted that a delegate should if possible be sent to the meeting to which the President of the United States had extended an invitation, and that the Secretary of the Committee should take part in the Minorities Conference of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, which is to deal with this question. Over the situation of the non-Aryans in Germany and Austria, written and oral reports were presented which show that assistance is also necessary inside Germany. The existing possibilities of emigration were also discussed. In addition to the facilities for settlement in South America, to which the International Committee gave its keen attention, the chances were also examined of increased emigration to Australia, although such facilities as are here available can obviously only be fully tried out in the course of this present summer. In spite of the willingness shown by churches in all countries, relief work for non-Aryan Christians is seriously handicapped for lack of means, which are curiously out of proportion to the wealth of assistance which it has been possible to raise in the Jewish circles of the various countries. The efforts of the International Christian Committee to keep away from any political emphasis of the question have meant that the same interest has not been aroused in Christian circles as among the Jews, for whom it is indeed not only a matter of charity, but of the greatest political problem with which the international situation has faced them in the last hundred years. The Christian motive of love towards one's neighbour should be all the more put into practice in relation to the non-Aryan Christian, because German non-Aryan Christians have in many respects much more to endure than the Jews.

F. Siegmund-Schultze.

SOUTH AMERICAN COLONY FOR REFUGEES

The War Resisters' International has just issued a statement on the progress made by the pioneer refugee group which has been settled, through the intervention of the International Christian Committee for German Refugees, in Colombia, South America. The War Resisters' International, for its part, has undertaken the responsibility for raising funds to keep the settlement going during its first difficult year. The following facts are taken from the statement in question :

There are some seventeen families settled, about sixty kilometres from the town of Popayan. A hundred and fifty hectars of land have been acquired on their behalf, but that is almost their only asset. Some three months ago they had cleared the greater part of the ground, a formidable task involving the removal of undergrowth in some places five or six metres high. By now, it is calculated, the greater part of the land will have been ploughed as well. But as the group possesses only one ox, a great deal of the ploughing has necessarily been done by hand. These people have, moreover, no seed for sowing and dare not part with the little money which they possess in order to buy it, for fear of leaving themselves entirely destitute of means for buying food and other necessities. The main problem, therefore, is to tide them over the present critical year, provide them with means for purchasing seed and keep them going till their first harvest is safely in and the settlement organised on a basis of production. For this purpose, the War Resisters' International are appealing for 300.000 French francs (about sixteen hundred pounds), which would be spent on the purchase of seed, agricultural implements, foodstuffs, possibly a tractor, or several oxen, and a second-hand lorry for the transport of the settlement's produce to the markets.

We are particulary anxious to recommend this appeal to our readers. As it points out, it is not here only a matter of providing temporary help to a practical and enterprising venture during a critical period, but of contributing to the laying of solid foundations for the future development of the settlement, and of thus opening up a way to a new life for others, beyond these first pioneers, who are at present wondering where they can go and where they will be allowed to live in peace.

Contributions may be sent to : The Right Hon. George Lansbury, M.P., War Resisters' International, 11, Abbey Road, Enfield, Middlesex, England.

A CALL FROM THE CONSISTORY OF THE NATIONAL CHURCH OF GENEVA

The following is the text of a call read recently in all the churches of Geneva :

"From the Consistory to the Members of the Church :

"In spite of the generous efforts made after the last world conflagration by many men of

good will to avoid the repetition of such catastrophes, atrocious acts of violence are taking place today : wars of conquest and civil wars, in which old men, women and children are bombarded or massacred, — the practice of an ideology in the name of which a man persecutes and exterminates his own brothers. And what is worse : these odious practices form a real theory, a doctrine worked out with method ; and in certain countries attempts are being made to impose it as a duty on the soldier, the citizen, the rising generation.

"Are we in Switzerland quite blameless in the matter ? Alas, we are not. Here, as elsewhere, Christian humanism is being met with a humanism no longer worthy of the name. The Word of God teaches us that man created in the image of God cannot realise that image except through the redemptive work of Christ ; but a mentality is being formed which rests on doctrines of hatred, violence and pride and which, beneath its outward refinement, makes one man the prey of another.

"In the face of these facts, the Church of Christ protests, by raising the voice of the Gospel.

"It does so constantly, from the Christian pulpit, and in its teaching. It is its duty to do so still more. The world itself is waiting and asking for its help.

"Upon frequent occasion, various political, pacifist or humanitarian organisations have invited the Church to work with them, to join with them for the realisation of peace. But these are fallacious invitations, though often sincere, and they are always a delicate matter for the Church. It would be so simple and so good to grasp those outstretched hands, but it is important not to be caught. The peace that the world is seeking is not always the peace preached by the Gospel.

"What generous efforts, what treasures of intelligence, what sacrifices have been offered and have none the less ended in defeat or in confusion. And what does that mean but that the world does not know or understand the real basis of peace. It is the Gospel alone which can provide it.

"The Church is the guardian of that good and the Church's duty before God is not to adapt its ideal to the human measure or veil a part of its message, but, on the contrary, to proclaim it to all in its integrity.

The Church has the duty to say to men : there is no real peace but the peace which comes from God, and as long as you will not reconcile yourselves with God in Jesus Christ, you cannot know lasting and fruitful peace. Only men at peace with God can create peace among themselves by brotherly love.

"In the name of Christ, the Church protests against war, the very epitome of all sin ; and it protests against class hatred and violence between citizens ; in the name of Christ it proclaims our God's will for peace ; in His name, it lifts up its voice in an urgent appeal to all men of good will.

"It is in obedience to Jesus Christ, and in the belief in the final coming of His Kingdom that they are working on earth as true peacemakers."

AMSTERDAM AND OECUMENICAL COOPERATION

If, as we are often reminded, the conferences of the oecumenical movement are steps in a continuing process rather than a series of isolated events, this is especially true of oecumenical gatherings of young people. As the younger generation has a longer future than its elders have for carrying forward the work, its activities may be seen in an even larger setting. The World Conference of Christian Youth in Amsterdam in 1939 is an undertaking in which it is hoped that the long-range view will obtain especially, as this enterprise is rooted in all the oecumenical movements and, it is hoped, will be a help toward the continuation of their work in the future.

While it is not possible to say what Amsterdam might bring in end results, it is important to note what it is bringing in preparation. A preparatory study, *The Christian Community in the Modern World*, while not designed to determine the actual conference programme, has been widely distributed in all parts of the world as a basis of preliminary discussion. Special adaptations of this study have been published in both Great Britain and America for particular use in these countries, and either direct translations or adaptations are being produced in seven other languages. This study is an attempt to draw together the chief results of all the world Christian gatherings of 1937 and 1938, with especial emphasis upon their relevance to youth. In addition, special adaptations for young people of the official reports of these conferences, as well as the reports themselves, are being widely employed as part of the preparatory material for Amsterdam.

Not alone the materials under discussion but the oecumenical character of the study circles brought together to consider them, suggests the extent to which the preparations for Amsterdam constitute a continuation of the work of the various branches of the oecumenical movement. In some countries or localities the nucleus and initiative for such groups has been provided through the World Alliance. In others the organisational relation has been primarily to

Life and Work. Again it has been a youth group of Faith and Order, or perhaps a group of people concerned especially with the work of the International Missionary Council. In some cases it has been one of the independent Christian youth movements. But whatever the organisations involved, the interests of all these bodies come to expression in the actual discussion of the materials.

It is significant that partly in recognition of the value of this inter-organisational character of the enterprise, the Utrecht Conference on the Proposed World Council of the Churches formally endorsed the Amsterdam Conference and made provision for the continued financial support of the share in its preparation which had previously been carried by the Universal Christian Council. The World Alliance has been one of the chief supporters of the enterprise from the first. The International Missionary Council is also officially collaborating, introducing the Conference to the churches of the distant countries.

In addition to eliciting collaboration on a world scale anong the oecumenical bodies, the 1939 Conference is providing opportunity for cooperation nationally and locally among church and Christian groups which in many cases have not previously united in common enterprises. With regard to youth organisations of the actual churches, this cooperation is especially notable in countries where certain denominations are distinct minority bodies not enjoying all the privileges of the more powerful communions. In some countries it has been evidenced also in a new cooperation of the youth organisations of the churches with such independent Christian youth movements as the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A. and the Student Christian Movement, all of which are collaborating in the conference both nationally and through their world bodies. In keeping with this developing cooperation, representatives of the different national movements of numerous countries will meet in August near Paris in a significant international conference to make common plans concerning the final Amsterdam programme. The very fact of such a united international meeting, with all the national and local cooperation it represents, would be a great step forward even if in the providence of God the conference itself should never take place.

THE GENEVA SEMINAR ON CHURCH LIFE AND THOUGHT

From July 25 till August 10 next the Seminar on church life and thought will once more be held in Geneva. The following lecturers have promised to take part in it : Professor Dibelius, of Heidelberg ; Professor Pauck, of Chicago ; Professor van der Leeuw, of Groningen ; Professor Leenhard, of Geneva ; Professor Sommerlath, of Leipzig ; Professor Zankow, of Sofia ; the Dean of Exeter ; Professor Richards, of Lancaster, U. S. A. ; Dr. Thurneysen, of Basle ; Dr. Peter Barth, of Berne ; Dr. Hanns Lilje, of Berlin ; Director Schönfeld, Dr. Thélin, Dr. Visser't Hooft, Professor A. Keller, all of Geneva. The central subject for the work of the Seminar will be "The Church". Church questions will be studied in their biblical, systematical, and missionary significance, and with a view to mutual enlightenment on church life and thought. An exact programme may be obtained free of charge from the Director of the Seminar, at 52 rue des Pâquis, Geneva. The languages used at the Seminar will be English, French and German, and arrangements will be made for translation. The cost for the whole course will be Swiss Francs 25, and accommodation will be available at reasonable prices. Considerable reductions in price are obtainable on the French railways. For all further information, enquiries should be addressed to the Director of the Seminar.

GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION

The triennial General Committee Meeting of the World's Student Christian Federation will be held at "La Roche Dieu", Bièvres, near Paris, August 8 to 18. Twenty-eight National Movements have already announced that they will send delegates to this meeting. Some of the strongest delegations will be from countries at great distance from the place of meeting, such as China, which will send five delegates, and India, which will send six.

The first two days will be given to reports on the Federation and on some of the National Movements. On the third day four sections will begin to work on the following topics :

1. The S. C. M. and the University ; 2. The S. C. M. and the Social Order ; 3. The S. C. M. and the World of Nations ; 4. The S. C. M. and the World Mission of the Church. Lectures will be given on : "The World Christian Community and the Modern World" ; "The World Christian Community and the Church" ; "The Lordship of Jesus Christ" ; "Jesus Christ in the Bible" ; "The Cross and the Resurrection" ; "The Kingdom". Sub-Committees will deal with "Publications" ; "Survey of Movements" ; "Federation Conferences" ; "Finance" ; and "Work among Schoolboys and Schoolgirls". There will be at least a hundred delegates attending the meeting. Plans for the work of the Federation during the next three years will result from the discussions and Committee reports.

THE FEDERATION MOUNTAIN CAMP

An international camp for students will be held under the auspices of the World's Student Christian Federation at Goldern, Switzerland, from August 20 to 30. Each morning will be given to group Bible Study on a common subject, and each evening there will be speeches on the same subject. The main topics are : " Christians before the Bible " ; " Foundations of our Christian Calling " ; " The Christian Family " ; " Our Calling as Students " ; " Social Responsibilities of Christian Students " ; " The Universal Church, my Nation and the Nations " ; and " The Evangelistic Task of the Federation ". The leaders of the Bible Study are to be : Walter Sigrist of Switzerland, Alan Richardson of England, and Théo Preiss of France. Among Federation leaders who will be present are : T.Z. Koo, Hanson Hwang and Peter Wong of China ; Mr. and Mrs. Liebenberg of South Africa ; Herbert King of the U. S. A. ; and Grigore Latinoff of Bulgaria. The afternoons and two days will be devoted to expeditions in the mountains.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kraemer, H. : *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World.* Edinburgh House Press, 2 Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1. 1938. 470 pages. 8/6d.

This book was written in preparation for the forthcoming World Conference of Missions, but, to an extent that is true of hardly any other publication, it concerns the whole oecumenical movement. The central theme of Christian thought and action in modern times is handled here in a quite remarkable manner. Indeed, just as the Edinburgh World Conference of Missions in 1910 gave decisive impetus to the oecumenical movement in general, so, in these pages, the goal, the means and the tasks of oecumenical work, which bestow upon the movement its own unique meaning and claim to existence, are presented with impressive understanding and penetrative power. With a tension that rarely slackens, one follows Dr. Kraemer in his bold Christian study of the crisis in East and West. He reveals the ever present, though not always recognised, « crisis of the Church », due to the permanent tension between its true nature and its empirical reality, and goes on to demand a basic re-orientation in the relations of the Church to the world. But it is impossible in a review to do full justice to the almost inexhaustible richness of this standard work, with its really oecumenical approach to the struggle of Christendom in the non-Christian world. Starting out from a fundamental study of the Christian faith and the Christian ethic, based on the full reality of biblical thought, Dr. Kraemer analyses the Christian attitude to the non-Christian religions, in relation to their main decisive problems. A masterly study follows of the great non-Christian religious systems, in their fundamental philosophies, in so far as they are of significance for the Christian revelation. This analysis is based on a wide knowledge of the whole reality of the social order which is inseparably bound up with these religious systems, and it provides a keen insight into the vast changes which have come about for the most part under the influence of the west, and which are leading to widespread shocks and upheavals in these religious systems. Thorough attention is given at this point to the special problems of missionary work, in a way that makes quite clear the fundamental changes in the situation of Christian missions, and that indicates the way to the accomplishment of the tasks imposed.

This study acquires for us its particular significance through the fact that in it central questions of the oecumenical movement, — the question of the Church in its relation to the world, the need for a stronger biblical foundation of the whole work, the debate on the basic problem of revelation and natural theology, and on the modern conception of man, of history and of the community, of state and education, of nation and economics, — are shown up, in this confrontation of the Christian faith with the non-Christian religions, in their full gravity and entirety and in their close relationship to the present world situation. This book will indeed become of outstanding importance and guidance in the whole oecumenical study work of the future, and a source on which to draw for a grasp of the essential points of conflict between Church and world. It will, moreover, release oecumenical study work from a relative limitation, in the questions on which it works, to the situation in the European and Anglo-Saxon countries, and will lead it into a really oecumenical sphere.

Keller, A : *Five Minutes to Twelve. A Spiritual Interpretation of the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences.* 127 pages, Cokesbury Press, Nashville, U.S.A. 1938. Price $1.00.

The official reports of the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences have already revealed emphatically how the common services of worship, the praying and singing together, formed part of the essential foundations of the two gatherings, without which the other work would have been unthinkable. The author of this present book gives a deeply impressive interpretation of that side of the conferences, and it must arouse an echo of agreement and deep joy in the hearts of those who were present. For others, such a presentation provides the best possible approach to the findings of the official reports. They will realise how those reports grew out of a passionate search for the reality of God, out of ardent prayers for a revelation of God's Will and out of the hearing of such prayers. The great crisis and upheavals in the modern world, and the main social and political attempts at their solution, are strikingly handled here from the oecumenical angle ; and a keen analysis of the spiritual attitude and spiritual experiences of the two world conferences indicates where the Church of Christ can fulfil its special obligations in the present world conditions, where the Church has refused that task and where God has given new possibilities of service. But the keynote of this book is the solemn challenge to the churches and their members to act oecumenically. It is permeated with a sense of the

inner, renewing miracle which, under the action of the Holy Spirit, those oecumenical gatherings repeatedly experienced and in which they believed and gloried.

Revelation : With Contributions by G. Aulen, Karl Barth, S. Bulgakoff, M. C. d'Arcy, T. S. Eliot, W. M. Horton, W. Temple. Edited by John Baillie and N.H. Martin. Faber and Faber Ltd. 24 Russell Square, London. 1937. 312 pages. 7/6d.

This symposium is an outcome of the oecumenical exchange of thought which has been going on for the last three or four years in connection with the preparations for the Oxford and Edinburgh world conferences, and for the forthcoming world conference of missions to be held in Madras. It is a book that is assuming ever growing importance in the further oecumenical discussion on the nature and content of the Christian revelation. One might have wished that these outstanding representatives of the main types of Christian faith and thought had taken up the debate more directly with each other. But then perhaps the total conception of the Christian revelation peculiar to each individual and its treatment in the present discussion, would not have gained such clarity. Moreover, Prof. John Baillie, of the Scottish Reformed Church, gives a very lucid survey, in his introduction, of the essential points of similarity and divergence which are here apparent.

In a striking confrontation of the Christian revelation with the philosophies of typical American and British thinkers and writers, such as Shaw, H. G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, Irving Babbitt, D. H. Lawrence and others, T. S. Eliot, the writer and poet, of the Anglican Church, reveals the actual significance of this oecumenical discussion in the sphere of the spiritual debate now going on. Karl Barth follows with an emphatic and sure analysis of the Christo-centric character of revelation, and in three sections, on the essence, the tokens and the work of revelation, links it up with the fullness of Christian faith and life, giving special consideration to the relations between revelation and Holy Scripture, and to its significance for the proclaiming of the Word and the administration of the sacraments, for the Church and for the ministry. Then comes the contribution of the Archbishop of York, emphasising also the particular nature of the Christian revelation as determined by Holy Scripture and as contrasted with any philosophy of aristotelian or platonic origin, in connection with a presentation of the doctrine of the incarnation. Stress is furthermore laid on the need for a " general revelation ", proceeding from the existence of everything created, so far as God Himself, as the ultimate reality, is the origin of all creation. In this discussion on the problem of " natural and rational revelation " and of " natural theology " and of its relationship to the *revelatio specialis*, Prof. S. Bulgakoff, of the Russian Orthodox Church, and Prof. Horton, of the Baptist Church, enter the field, and the question is finally taken up by the Swedish Lutheran Bishop Aulen. He shows it to be one of the main dangers of theology that one should arrive at any sort of use of a " general revelation " which would lead to the deification of man or of human orders. Bulgakoff takes above all as his starting point the mystery of the Christian revelation and discusses, on the basis of his own particular conception, the questions of the " natural " and the " divine " revelation, of tradition and Holy Scripture and of the authority of the Church. Tradition, — as the life of the Church itself, — is not seen here as *one* of the sources of Christian revelation, but rather as " revelation itself in actu, as life in God through life in the Church ". The Roman Catholic scholar, Fr. d'Arcy, finally establishes the common features which today facilitate in a new way and give fresh impetus to inter-confessional discussion on the " rational " and " supernatural " character of revelation. Horton, one of the representatives of the younger generation of theologians in North America, examines the question of revelation and reason in the Early Church and at the Reformation, and considers the question of the limits of reason and of the supremacy of revelation and, — characteristically, — the question of the limits of revelation and of the need for a " natural theology ". Taking into account also the contribution of Bishop Aulen, who discusses the question of the Christian revelation in connection with the great facts of the Christian faith, — resurrection, forgiveness of sins and new life, and the love of God, — then a real insight is gained into the whole state of the present theological debate. This whole exchange of thought is dominated by a sense of the sharp conflict between the genuine Christian attitude and that of a secularised humanism and idealism widely prevalent today and the discussion is determined by a grasp of the missionary obligation of the Church, the very fulfilment of which brings the question of revelation into a central position in the debate with the great non-Christian religious systems.

Atkinson, Dr. H. A. *Prelude to Peace.* Harper and Brothers, New York, 1937. 222 pages. Price $ 2.00.

The early chapters of this book survey the large-scale efforts made since the conclusion of the world war to bring about general disarmament and to create a sense of mutual confidence between the nations on which to establish peace. It is a story of fluctuation between progress and deadlock, between constructive, if idealistic, endeavour and deliberate sabotage ; and a clear picture emerges of the manner in which the world, in making such an approach to the problem, has been consistently putting the cart before the horse and has still been thinking and acting in terms of preparation for war, with each nation protesting that its measures are purely defensive, instead of educating the average citizen for peace. Dr. Atkinson goes on in particular to stress the responsibility of the Christian communities in this latter task, and to make constructive suggestions for the building up of a network of cells of Christian opinion and influence. " The smallest church ", he writes, " in the smallest community is, as far as that community and its people are concerned, the centre of the universe. " And he outlines an approach to the problem that will be based on the education of such communities into a realisation of their obligation and of the increasing influence which mutual cooperation will secure. Dr. Atkinson urges the formation of peace committees in every

church, which will take active steps to mobilise the inherent forces for peace and to bring and keep them in touch with each other in such a way that a really inter-community, international Christian public opinion will be formed and will make itself felt. This book reveals very clearly the gap, the time lag, as it were, which still exists between the overhead treatment of the peace problem through official conferences and international agreements, with political and material self-interest militating against real progress, and its handling by the cumulative force of a really enlightened public opinion. This analysis of the peace problem reveals a certain sense of constructive energies that are to some extent missing fire and running to waste through misdirection or lack of coordination and the book represents an active attempt to rally them towards a common focus.

Marinoff, Irene, Ph. D. : *Peace and the Churches.* With an Introduction by the Archbishop of York. London, 1938. Independent Press, Ltd., Memorial Hall, E.C.4. 64 pages. 1/—.

This booklet has come out at a time when it is difficult for most of us to associate with the idea of peace anything more than the fact that the war so constantly spoken of and so generally feared has not yet actually occurred. But the whole aim of Dr. Marinoff, who is the first holder of the Jessie Stewart Spicer Peace Fellowship, in which capacity she visited the Continent last autum for the purposes of this present study, is to urge a more constructive conception of peace, in which it will no longer be thought of as the mere absence of war. The problem is revealed as one of education towards a real sense of federation, through which the nationals of any country will come no longer to expect to be exclusive judges in their own cause, and in which the conception of power relationships will disappear. Primary attention is given to the responsibility of the churches in relation to this educational task, and to a review of the strength and weakness of the churches in contributing to the evolution of a genuine international order. In this connection, a critical examination is included of the report of Section Five of the Oxford Conference, which dealt with "The Church and the International Order". Dr. Marinoff's plea is for a definite, practical programme on the part of the churches, for an insistence on study and the acquiring of unbiased information on world conditions, for active measures for the removal within their own ranks of such inconsistencies as the colour-bar and anti-semitic practices and for an uncompromising reminder to the State that it is not the supreme authority, but exists under the "ultimate governance of God". This whole booklet makes a bold, long-visioned approach to the problem of peace, and gives scant consideration to the mere avoidance of war for the sake of going on as we are.

Notcutt, L.A. and Latham G.C. : *The African and the Cinema.* An Account of the work of the Bantu Educational Cinema Experiment during the period March 1935 to May 1937. With a Foreword by J. Merle Davis. Edinburgh House Press, London. 1937. 256 pages. 3/6d net.

A realisation of the potentialities of the cinema, both for good and for ill, led to the making of this experiment by the Department of Social and Industrial Research of the International Missionary Council, in the use of the film for educational and cultural purposes among African natives. A primary value of the experiment was evidently that it forestalled on this particular field the commercial film, with its often distorting picture of western civilisation and its bad effect on the native mind, that it got in first with a type of film that combined instruction with entertainment. Extremely interesting account is given of the making of the films on the spot and of the attempt which they represent to win the native over from his old-fashioned treatment of his local problems to the new and progressive methods available. Films were made on such questions as soil erosion, cattle disease and the availability of veterinary aid, the prevention of such diseases as hookworm, the use of the savings bank. The experiment incidentally provided a valuable opportunity for research into the capacity of the natives themselves, both as actors and to some extent as technical assistants, while their reactions and comments as an audience gave an infallible verdict on the success or failure of each film, and provided a unique insight into the workings of the native mind. That the experiment was regarded as highly worth while in official quarters is evident from the support that was forthcoming and it is to be hoped that the recommendations for the continuation of the work on the same lines will be followed up.

Mœhler, J.-A. : *L'Unité dans l'Eglise*, ou Le Principe du Catholicisme d'après l'esprit des Pères des trois premiers siècles de l'Eglise. Série "Una Sanctam", Vol. 2. 1938. Les éditions du Cerf, Paris. 304 pages. Fr. fr. 38.

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